(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATTYA): (a) to (d) A proposal to enact a Central Legislation for the welfare of agricultural workers has been considered and discussed in the meetings of State Labour Minister and various other fora. However, no defnite consensus in this respect could emrerge. Government has launched Krishi Shramik Samajik Surkhsha Yojana—2001 for agricultural workers form 1st July, 2001. Under the supervision of the Ministry fo Labour, the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) will implement the Scheme in a phased manner. The following provisions of social security have been made under the Scheme:

(a) Life-cum-accident insurance,

(b) Money back, and

(c) Pension-cum-superannuation benefits.

Agricultural workers in the age group of 18 years to 50 years will be eligible under the Scheme. The worker will contribute Re. 1/per day or Rs. 365/ per year and the Government will pay Rs. 2/per day or Rs. 730/per year per beneficiary from the Social security Fund of India under the Scheme.

Distress sale of rice in Orissa

*67. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing distress sale of rice in Orissa;

(b) whether farmers in Western Orissa are being exploited by the middlemen and the rice is being sold at a throw away price; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to rescue the farmers in the State from the clutches of middlemen?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) Reports about alleged distress sale of paddy, and not rice, have been received from some districts of Orissa.

(b) FCI, as the procuring agent, purchases rice from the millers who, in turn, purchase paddy from the farmers. There are reports that paddy has been purchased from the farmers by middlemen for sale to the millers.

(c) According to information received from the State Government, instruction have been issued to all Collectors to keep a watch on the purchase of paddy by the agents of millers and to see that MSP is paid to the farmers. They have also been requested to ensure that the millers and their agents issue correct vendor receipts to the farmers for the purchase of paddy. The State Government has further pointed out that any lapse would be handled with firmness and be dealt with under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980.

Fall in annual employment growth

*68. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's annual employment growth rate has fallen to one per cent during the last seven years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the growth in the public sector employment has severely come down from 2.17 per cent during 1983—89 to 0.03 per cent during 1991—2000;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefore; and

(d) what steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (d) As per the survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organization during 1993-1994 and 1999-2000, the average annual growth rate of employment was of the order of 1% as per Usual Principal and Subsidiary Status Approach during 1993-94 to 1999-2000.

As per the information collected Employment Market Information Programme of Directorate General of Employment and Training, the average growth rate of employment in public sector which was of the order of 2.08% per annum during 1983—89 has come down to around 0.15% per annum during the period 1991—2000. Lack of upgradation of the technologies due to financial constraints, production being non-competitive price-wise and quality-wise, compulsion to run non-profitable industries in the private sector influenced maintenance of employment level and creation of new jobs in the public sector. Due to increased competition and the need to right size, there is a limited scope